

*The Rev. Mr. Wybe*

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Mr. WEBSTER'S

ELECTION-SERMON

MAY 28, 1777.





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S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE

HONORABLE COUNCIL,

AND THE HONORABLE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

OF THE

STATE of the MASSACHUSETTS-BAY,

IN

NEW-ENGLAND.

AT B O S T O N,

MAY 28, 1777.

BEING THE ANNIVERSARY FOR THE ELECTION  
OF THE HONORABLE COUNCIL.

BY SAMUEL WEBSTER, A. M.

PASTOR OF A CHURCH IN SALISBURY.

"Let God arise, let his Enemies be scattered : Let  
them also that hate him flee before him."

"As smoke is driven away, so drive them away : As  
wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked  
perish at the presence of God."

"But let the righteous be glad : Let them rejoice be-  
fore God, yea let them exceedingly rejoice."

PSALM LXVIII. beginning.

B O S T O N :

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M,DCC,LXXVII.

STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS-BAY.

*In the House of REPRESENTATIVES,*

*May 28, 1777.*

**O**N Motion, *Ordered*, That Mr. *Simpson*, Capt. *Greenleaf*, Capt. *Howard*, Mr. *Jeffries* and Mr. *Wendell*, be a Committee to wait on the Reverend Mr. WEBSTER, and return him the Thanks of the House for his SERMON preached before the General Assembly this Day : And desire a Copy for the Press.

A true Extract from the Minutes.

Attest.



FREEMAN, Clerk.



A N

## ELECTION-SERMON.

I CONGRATULATE the *General Assembly* of this State, this day convened in the city of their ancient solemnities ;—I congratulate this *capital*, whom the Lord hath delivered out of the hands of the enemy ;—I congratulate this *respectable audience*, on the liberty of meeting here again, with safety on this important anniversary, to acknowledge the Lord God of our fathers, and to seek his direction and blessing on our political affairs to be this day transacted.

And

And with the divine leave and assistance,  
shall discourse to you on those words of  
holy writ, which you may find in the

XLV Chapter of EZEKIEL,  
part of the 8th, together with the 9th verse.

— *And my princes shall no more oppress  
my people. And the rest of the land shall  
they give to the house of Israel, accord-  
ing to their tribes.*

*Thus saith the Lord God, let it suffice you  
O princes of Israel : remove violence and  
spoil, and execute judgment and justice ;  
take away your exactions from my people,  
saith the Lord God.*

’ **T**IS happy, that we have in the  
holy scriptures divine directions  
to regulate the conduct of *all*  
*ranks* : nothing less than the *au-*  
*thority of God* can do this, to any purpose.  
But



But, when God speaks, before whom *prince* and *peasant* stand upon a parr, methinks, all, from the lowest to the highest, must listen with a sacred veneration !

Indeed, as God does not now direct his voice *immediately to us*, we must not counterfeit it, and say—*the Lord saith*—when the Lord hath not spoken. But yet, in similar circumstances, we may, by analogy, take the ancient voice of God, as directed to us. This is the use we are to make of a great part of the old testament.

Let us keep this in mind and, I trust, we shall find that we are not unconcerned in the words now read to you.

They were spoken at a time when there was a general corruption of manners ; *princes* and *people* conspiring to provoke God to anger, and to bring down his judgments.

And, if we look over the prophets, we shall find that the *rulers* were peculiarly guilty : the *princes* were become *mighty oppressors* : and, when foreign enemies attacked them, *unnaturally* joined, and conspired

spired their ruin ! This was a crime of the highest nature ! For, nothing can be more aggravated than for the *shepherds* to *mislead* and *butcher* the flock they were set to *defend* and *feed* ! And the *guardians* of the public *interests*, to turn *traitors* and *assassins* to them that raised them to their high places. !

To the *princes* and *rulers*, therefore, who were too big to hear any other, the *God of Heaven* speaks in my *text*, and some preceeding and following verses.

Ordering, that the rulers should have a reasonable portion laid out round their cities, by the side of the portion of the *priests*, which was laid out *by measure*. And then that the rest of the land, as in the text, should be divided among the people as their inheritance.

And then, says God—*my princes shall no more oppress*. That is—Thus *prince* and *people* shall know their own, and enjoy their own : And the princes shall make no more encroachments upon the *people's rights* or *possessions* ; which are as sacred as theirs.

*Thus*



*Thus saith the Lord, Let it suffice you O princes of Israel: remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord God.*

As if he had said — Who is he that will not hear, when the Lord of heaven speaks? It concerns all the *princes and rulers* of the world to listen, for *God, God, I say, speaks!* It is *enough* O *princes and rulers* and more than enough, that ye have done already, in *oppressing* and *abusing* those whom you were bound by every tie to *protect* and *make happy!* *Cease your violence* then, make no more *spoil* upon my people! But let *judgment* and *justice* be impartially executed, that all may have the benefit of it: and put an end to your extravagant *exactions*: and henceforth, let taxes and tribute be requir'd only in proportion to the necessity of the public affairs, and not to *support your own luxury* or *defend your unrighteous claims!*

Now, from this, *rulers* may learn something what is the *will of God* concerning them; and the *people* somewhat of their *duty* to them. And all may be led to

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mourn

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mourn over the mighty oppressions of the earth, and to pray and hope for deliverance in God's time.

Let me therefore beg the attention of this honourable audience, while, in the fear of God, and with a due respect to my numerous superiours, I discourse in the following manner.

*First. Consider, very briefly the duty of princes and rulers to the people.*

*2dly. The duty of people to their rulers.*

*3dly. Take a brief view of the oppressions of the rulers of the world.*

*4thly. Enquire, how it comes to pass that such multitudes of mankind suffer themselves to be thus grievously oppress'd, by a few of their fellow men.*

*5thly. Consider, how contrary this is to the will of God.*

*6thly. Just hint to the people at some things, which seem to me most likely to guard against tyranny in their rulers.*

*And*



*And finally, consider, a moment, the happiness of mankind when oppressors shall cease, and they who rule over men shall be just, ruling in the fear of God.*

I. Then, I shall very briefly consider the duty of princes and rulers to the people.

Now as to old-fashion'd rulers hackney'd to the ways of the world, the voice from heaven cries to them to *oppress no more*. It cries most solemnly in my text. But as such rulers hear neither *God* nor *man*, we have no immediate business with them! And God grant we never may.

'Tis other kind of magistrates with whom we have to do; *chosen by the people* (as all lawful magistrates are) to defend them against those ravening wolves, which have been devouring them.

And, their duty is to exert themselves in *watching* over and *defending* them, with unwearied diligence; lest they give the people room to say, that *power* is to be trusted with no body, and so are put out of conceit of all government, and run into anarchy and confusion.

In

In the first place, (where the constitution is dissolv'd) their duty is (with the assent of the people) to frame the most *just and equitable constitution* ; calculated, in the best manner which human wisdom can devise, to answer the great and only design of government, *the security of the lives, liberty, and property of the people.*

For, though, where the *magistrates* and *people* are generally *virtuous*, the people may be tolerably happy under almost any constitution, or indeed without any. Yet, as the world is, a *good constitution* is by no means to be disregarded ; but is the first foundation to be laid for the happiness of the people ; and of great importance.

2. The making and establishing of *good laws*, is another important duty of theirs.

And it is a rare happiness indeed when they have it in their power to begin all anew, and *revise and correct* the whole *code*, and fix every thing on the stable basis of perfect equity.

And, here—Let no man make a law, which in the exercise of virtue, he would not willingly submit to.

3. *Wise*



3. *Wise and virtuous men must in the next place be appointed to every important office, that the laws may be faithfully and impartially executed.*

Without this, all the laws in the world will answer no good end : but government will be despis'd, and vice and disorder reign and rage. Under the best constitution, *the wicked will walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.* Let me therefore conjure by all that is sacred those who have these appointments in their hands, never, never, to let this be seen in our land ! These hints must suffice at present. And I proceed,

II. *As briefly, To consider the duty of people to their rulers,*

It seem'd meet to mention the *duty of rulers first*, because the *duty of the people* results from their honest discharge of it. And, if the rulers grossly neglect their duty, so as to fail of answering the end of their institution, especially if they play the *tyrant* and *destroy* what they were appointed to preserve, common sense teaches, and we all agree, that they forfeit all *obedience and respect.*

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The renown'd and excellent emperor *Trajan* order'd that the very *prayers* for him, should be *conditional*—if he *observes the laws*—if he *govern as he ought*—if he *make the people happy*. The light of nature taught him this.

And yet, we ought to consider magistrates as *men*, and make allowance for *human frailties* and *mistakes*. And therefore, if they *mean honestly* and in any tolerable measure answer the end of their advancement, especially if they discharge their duty, *wisely* and *faithfully*, the people's duty to them cannot be dispensed with, any more than other duties, on pain of eternal *damnation*.

In such cases they are bound not only by fear of wrath, but for *conscience sake*. For such an *ordinance of man* is *God's ordinance* also.

But, depend upon it, *no government is God's ordinance*, but that which is for *the good of mankind*: it would be the grossest reflection on the *divine goodness* to suppose it! Nay, I think, but little short of *blasphemy*!

But,



But, to good rulers the people owe—

1. *Honor and respect.* 'Tis absurd to suppose the people should choose those to *lead* and *defend* them, who are not thought worthy of these by the electors ! How absurd then to deny it !

2. *Obedience.* For the people to choose men to be *rulers* and call them so ; and not readily obey them, when acting in character, is to make themselves contemptible.

3. *Tribute,* is due, in order to their honorable support, and to carry on the great affairs of government.

As no man goeth a warfare at his own charges, so 'tis absurd to expect *magistrates* to devote themselves to the public, without an adequate reward for their important service.

And, at some seasons, when all lies at stake, it is impossible but *taxes* and *tribute* must run high. And, when *necessary*, they should be readily paid, unless they out-run all the benefit, which can hardly be, where *property, liberty* and *life*, are all at stake together ! To talk of *expence* in such a case,  
is

is to *dream*. For 'till it be determined whether we have any thing or not, what is *expen*ce to us ?

4. Another duty of the people, is to *de-fend their magistrates*, in time of danger, against all attempts of bloody men.

In times of danger, like the present, whether we consider it or not, *they*, and all *others*, who go *foremost*, are peculiar marks of the enemies vengeance : and therefore every man in whose cause they act, is bound in *honor* and *conscience* to *stand by* and *defend* them.

And, how shocking a crime, how disgraceful to humanity, would it be to desert them, (the most *honorable President* of our *Congress*, and our incomparable General, for example) and leave them to fall a sacrifice to the fury of the enemy ! Should we be capable of such meanness, we should never deserve to have another friend ? But I proceed

III. *To take a brief view of the oppressions of the rulers of the world.*

To



To pretend to give a particular history of this, would be almost the same thing as to give the *history of the world*, from *Cain* to *Nimrod*, and from him to *Nebuchaduezzar*, and from him to *Alexander*, and from him to *Julius Caesar*, and from *Julius* to *George* !

Nor could any, who have the common feelings of humanity, bear the tragical story, without growing almost stiff with horror ! For, it is almost one continued scene of *cruelty, blood and slaughter* !

Those who have never felt the weight of these oppressions, nor enter'd much into the history of them, can form no idea of them !

Men are, to their shame, in general, too much tyrants to one another. I wish the present day were not, to the grief of all good men, too much a witness of this, while we are all suffering together unparallel'd oppressions from the common Enemy !

But, vile as these things are, they are all as nothing compared with what has been done by the *great oppressors* of the  
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earth, who were entrusted with power by the people to defend them from the *little oppressors*. The *sword of justice* was put into their hands, but behold they soon turned it into a *sword of oppression*; and made their *little finger* thicker than all *their loins* of whom the people were afraid.

And so, in a multitude of instances, the *remedy* has prov'd unspeakably worse than the *disease* !

The business of all in power is to *defend* the *lives, liberties and property* of the *people* : And they have no other business : And yet every one of these have the great tyrants of the world invaded ! they have not only *robb'd and spoil'd*, them of their *property* by their *violent exactions* and by engaging them in *needless wars*, to gratify their own *lust, ambition and avarice* ! but at length rose to such a pitch of arrogance, as to claim the *people* and all they had as their *property*, to be dispos'd of at their pleasure, as if all the *people* were made for them and not they for the people !

One would think this was *tyranny* and *slaverly compleat* !——And yet they  
have



have gone further still.——Being intoxicated with power, they have sometimes butcher'd the poor people like *roaring lions* and *raging bears*, and far beyond ! They have *burnt Towns* and *Cities*, and *depopulated Countries* ; which they were bound to protect : And *tortur'd* those from whom they receiv'd their *power* and *support* ; and torn out *their entrails* with hellish cruelty, from whom came their *crowns* and *diadems*, their *purple raiment* and their *suntuous fare* !

Were it not a day in which *all the man* must be summon'd up in every soul—who could refrain from tears ?

It would be easy, if the time would permit, to exemplify all these several kinds of oppression, a thousand times over, in the civil history of the world. But I shall confine myself to a few hints from the *sacred History*, that most *sure word*.

See then the spirit of a tyrant in the haughty message of *Benhadad* to the king of Israel, ( *1 Kings, 20* ) *Thy silver and thy gold is mine, thy wives also and thy children,*

*children, even the goodliest, are mine. I will send my servants,— and whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall take away ! One would think this was Lucifer son of the morning !*

Look also into *Egypt* and see how *the tyrant* oppress'd the poor *Israelites*, whose ancestors had sav'd the land ! But all was forgotten, and they were made the vilest *slaves* and *drudges* ! and their very *groans* and *petitions* (like ours) became *crimes* ; and *increas'd* instead of *lightning* their burdens ! Till at length, shocking to think of, every *male child* was order'd to be *murder'd as soon as born* ! And they had no deliverance, till Heaven heard their cry and took vengeance on their oppressors !

Another instance you have in the book of *Esther* : Where *Haman* the haughty favourite and prime minister to *Ahasuerus*, being offended at one honest Jew, for want of a little ceremony or homage ; in his rage, procur'd a decree of the easy monarch, to make a general massacre of his whole nation : which, because of a stupid custom in that empire, never to repeal a royal



royal edict, was hardly prevented being put in execution ! Who can think of it without horror !

And what a monster was *Nabash* the Ammonite, (See 1 Sam. xi.) who, when the men of *Jabesh Gilead* offer'd to submit to him upon *terms*—scorning all *terms*—answer'd—*On this condition will I make covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes.*

Can human nature be thus debas'd ?  
(Was this a *man* or a *beast* ?)

The kings of Babylon furnish us with another complicated instance from *Nebuchadnezzar* to their fall ; at which hell is represented as moved at their coming—and saying—*Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms ? That made the world a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof ? And the whole earth is represented as at rest and quiet when he was dead, and as breaking forth into singing.* (See Isaiah xiv.) where this great oppressor, this *Lucifer son of the morning* is most livelily painted out, and in a manner that might well make every Tyrant on earth tremble !

Another

Another awful instance, (and the last I shall mention) is that of the *cruel* and *bloody Herod*, (*Mat. ii.*) who *murder'd* all the little innocents of *Bethlehem* and the *coasts adjacent*, in a fit of *jealousy* and *rage* ! which seems to be the utmost that human nature is capable of ! But I must forbear—and proceed,

IV. *To consider, a moment, how it comes to pass, that such multitudes of mankind suffer themselves to be thus grievously oppress'd by a few of their fellow-men.*

That so many *millions of men* all over the world should be brought into *bondage* to *one* or to a *few* ; and kept under it after they have endur'd every *insult*, *abuse* and *torment*, which man can inflict ; if the fact was not *notorious*, would seem absolutely *incredible* !

No man denies but that *originally* all were equally *free*. Men did not *purchase* their *freedom*, nor was it the *grant* of *kings*, nor from *charter*, *covenant*, or *compact*, nor in any proper sense from *man* : But from *God*. They were *born free*.

But



But, behold, *sin* reign'd and disturb'd the *peace of men* : And then *tyrants* presently began to *reign* also : Like our *cloathing* they are the mark of lost innocence. The people trusting *too much power* in the hands of some to *defend* them, they presently used it to *oppress* them.

So long as men were *virtuous*, they either had no rulers, or chose the *wise* and *good*. But either these degenerated, being intoxicated with too much power ; or the people were governed by their lusts in choosing, and chose *bad men* : And then what wonder that these prov'd *tyrants* and govern'd by their lusts.

To trace this a little more particularly. Gross *ignorance* and *sloth* in the people must lay the foundation. *Ignorance* is as much the *mother of slavery* as of *popish devotion*.

If the body of the people become so *ignorant* as not to know the *bounds* of the *magistrates lawful authority* or their own *just rights*, how easily may the *prerogative* be *stretch'd*, and the people's rights invaded !

Or

Or, if, when the magistrates are chosen, they are too *sluggish* to attend the choice, or keep no careful *watch* over those that are in power, or, thro' inexcuseable *indolence*, will not exert themselves till 'tis too late ; who can wonder at this evil's creeping in ?

Again. All *intemperance* and *debauchery* lead to this. For they soon eat out the *heart*, the *strength*, the *courage* of a people ; and so prepare them to fall a prey to those who will *invade* their rights.

*Covetousness* also, it is certain, has had, and still has, a *great hand* in this *great evil*.

Some choose a *tyrant* because they want *posts* under him, in which they may share with him in *ease* and *luxury*. Or they are directly *brib'd* to put those into authority who *buy* them, because they design to sell them again. And when the people are so *covetous* and *venal* as to *sell themselves* first, how can they wonder if they are put to sale again by those who bought them ? When therefore this kind of *bribery* becomes common, if we had not so many examples



examples in the history of the world to prove it, our reason would teach us that slavery and ruin must be at the door.

Further, this great evil is partly owing to the *craft and subtilty* used by those *in power*.

*Power*, especially over-grown power, whets the ambition and sets all the wits to work to enlarge it. And therefore encroachments on the people's liberties are not generally made all at once, but so *gradually* as hardly to be perceived by the less watchful ; and all plaistered over, it may be, with such plausible pretences, that before they are aware of the *snare*, they are taken and cannot disentangle themselves.

These, these, no doubt are the *roots* of this great evil ; not to mention *conquests* made by force upon an inoffensive people, which, I am clear gives no *right* : but yet against which there is at present no remedy but force.

But, it may be asked——Why don't the multitude *rise* and *shake* off the yoke, when they find it intolerable ? The answer is easy——

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*Tyrants*

*Tyrants* always support themselves with *standing armies* ! And if possible the *people* are *disarmed*, or before the *militia* neglected and kept low, and the chief ruler at the head of all the military force. And, when it is come to this, it is extremely difficult for them to *unite* in sufficient bodies to effect their deliverance. But, if they would *unite*, nothing, nothing, could stand before them. So that in a word *the want of union, the want of union*, is the ruin of the world. For want of this those noble spirits who would risque all to be free, are forced to sit down in chains !

When therefore we see in a manner, the whole world, except these *American States*, groaning under the most abject *slavery*, with so few *successful attempts* to deliver themselves, how *stupid* must we be, if we do not exert ourselves to the utmost to save ourselves from falling into this *remediless* estate, this bottomless gulf of misery.

But I must not enlarge. But proceed,

V. *To consider, how contrary this is to the will of God.*

Now



Now a little attention to the *nature of God*, and to his *revealed will*, may fully satisfy us that it is the abominable thing which his soul hateth.

It may suffice to consider his *holiness* and *goodness*. Can his *holiness* possibly approve of *oppression* and *murders*, which are the grossest sins of men? Can it see *millions* and *millions* *butchered* by these *bloody* men without indignation? Impossible!

And as to his *goodness*, who will undertake to reconcile the approbation of human *misery* and *butchery* with this divine perfection? *There is none good, but one*; says Christ, and *that is God*: And yet no man of common benevolence can think of this without abhorrence! How then must our *heavenly Father* abhor it! And, *revelation* abundantly confirms it.

When God gave a *model of government* to his *favourite people*, he contrived it, with exquisite art, to guard against *tyranny* and *oppression*; and laid the most perfect foundation, which was ever laid, for *real* and *perpetual freedom*. This, I think, must be *clear* to every judicious eye who shall take a thoro' view of it, which I have not now time for.

But

But one thing I would just mention, which, so far as I know, is peculiar to that divine model of government—And that is—That by forbidding *usury* and even *interest upon money lent to the poor*, and appointing the *year of Jubilee*, when both *servants and lands* were to be *released*, *slavery* was directly prevented, and remotely all *tyranny and oppression*.

And, had not it been for the Jews madness in insisting to have their *wise and happy government* changed into a *monarchy*, I am persuaded, the world would have seen more of the excellency of that divine constitution by the *fruits*.

I need only add, that no *sin* is spoken of with more detestation, from one end of the bible to the other, than *oppression*, or more awfully *threatned*. And *wicked rulers* are compared to *fierce and ravenous beasts*, or to *bulls of Basban, roaring lions and raging bears*, &c. (See Amos iv. 1. and Prov. xxviii. 15, 16.) So that I need not enlarge, but proceed,

VI. *Just to hint to the people at some things which seem to me most likely to guard against tyranny in their rulers.*

Now



Now if I may, without presumption, shew my opinion, in a matter so much above me. I would say—

1. Let the people by all means encourage *schools* and *colleges*, and all the means of *learning* and *knowledge*, if they would guard against *slavery*. For a *wise*, a *knowing* and a *learned* people, are the least likely of any in the world to be enslaved.

2. Let them do all in their power to *suppress vice* and *promote religion* and *virtue*. For, besides their *natural* efficacy, I am persuaded no people were ever yet given up by God to *slavery*, till they had first given themselves up to *wickedness*.

3. Let only men of *integrity* be entrusted by you with any *power*. I think power is much safer in their hands than in men of *greater abilities*, but who are wanting in this essential point.

4. Let not *too much power* be trusted in the hands of any. It may hurt them, and then they may hurt the public. Or if it seem *necessary* in some critical time (like the present) to lodge great power in some *hand* or hands, let it be for a *limited time*,  
and

and the power renewed *annually*, if there is occasion.

5. Let elections of the *Legislators* be frequent ; and let *bribery* and *corruption* be guarded against to the utmost. Methinks, those who are guilty of these should be forever rendered incapable of any place of *power* or *trust* ; and this by a fundamental law of the constitution.

6. Let the *militia* be kept under the best regulation, and be made *respectable*. This will be a great security a great many ways.

7. Let *standing armies* be only for *necessity* and for a *limited time*. For, when corrupted, they have been the ruin of many a country's *liberty*.

8. Let these *armies* never be put under the absolute power of any magistrate in time of peace, so as to *act* in any *cause*, till that *cause* is approved by the *senate* and *people*.

9. Let *monopolies*, and all *kinds* and degrees of *oppression* be carefully guarded against. They are dangerous to the *peace* of  
of



of a *people*, and they are dangerous to their *liberties* ! I am mistaken if the present time does not prove it.

10. Let a *careful watch* be kept, and if any is found *grossly* and *notoriously* exceeding the *limits* of his power, methinks, it should be a standing invariable rule never to trust him with any power more.

Finally, Let the *powers* and *prerogatives* of the *rulers* and the *rights* and *privileges* of the *people*, be determined with as much precision as possible, that all may know their *limits*. And where there is any dispute, *let nothing be done*, till it is settled by the *people*, who are the fountain of power.

But I forbear, and submit these hints—which I only offer to consideration, as a friend to *liberty* & to *mankind*. And I hasten,

Lastly, *To consider a moment the happiness of mankind, when oppressors shall cease, and they who rule over men are just, ruling in the fear of God.*

That such an happy day should come to *his people*, seems to be promised by God,

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in the Text. And it seems promised to the *world* in many *passages*, (which I have not now time to mention.) And, who that sees the present melancholly state of the world, but must *wish* and *pray* and even *long* for the glorious day. For, then the most perfect models of government will be adopted, when, I doubt not, more regard will be had to the spirit of the *divine model* given to *Israel* than ever yet has been. And then a *just* and *equitable* body of laws will be framed, which can *oppress* no man, except by accident : which laws (with great deference to those before whom I speak) at least the *fundamental ones*, methinks, should by all means be *plain* and *concise* as possible ; or they cannot in reason be binding on the body of the people : for they cannot know them.

Again. The *wisest* and *best* men will be appointed to fill every department : and so none will *hurt* or *destroy* ; *violence* and *oppression* will *cease* ; their *officers* will be *peace* and their *exactors* *righteousness*. And so *justice* and *judgment* will run down the streets as a *river* in an uninterrupted course,



courte, and *righteousness* be as the waves of the sea, *successive* and *perpetual*.

And, then, O happy day, every man will enjoy the freedom of a man, *eat the fruit of his labour*, and *lie down* and *rise up* and *walk by the way*, and have none to *disturb* him or make him *afraid*. In a word, the people will *feel* themselves *happy*, and so cannot fail to honor their *rulers*, and pay them tribute, and discharge their whole duty to them. For a people made happy by their rulers, can never, I believe, be raised into a general tumult against them, or grossly neglect their duty to them.

But, the time would fail me to expatiate ; and if you live to see this glorious day, you will not want to have it described.

I shall conclude with some *Addresses*.

And, 1. To the *General Assembly*, this day convened.

*Honoured civil Fathers,*

We rejoice that we yet see our rulers, at a time when our enemies prophesied we should be all *anarchy* and *confusion*. And

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that we see no cause to address you in the language of the text : But may without flattery say, we see the day when (human frailties excepted,) our officers are *peace* and our *exactors righteousness* : And we rejoice in the *government* over us.

There are those, I am sensible, who still keep up their claim of authority over us, under whom we *suffered* such *unexampled oppressions* and *miserics* as made their yoke intolerable ! And they are still like the *roaring lion* and *raging bear* !

The words of my text might with great propriety be sounded in their ears. *Thus saith the Lord, Let it suffice you, O princes, remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord God.*

But alas, alas, they are deaf to the united voice of this oppressed land—They are deaf to the voice of God himself.—And therefore the united voice of the land hath said—*What portion have we in the King of the Isles ? What inheritance in the land of our fore fathers ? See to thine own house, O thou great oppressor !*

And



And to you now, O our *civil Fathers*, we look under God, to defend us against their bloody designs. We *blush* and *mourn* that any are so *fettish* and abandoned, as to counteract you in your endeavours to save the land ! who seem to desire to return back to *Ægypt* and to *bondage*, and to be ready to take their *butchers* for their *guardians*, and their *murderers* for their *protectors* !

But, these notwithstanding, the *union* is *glorious* ; and one would think the unheard of barbarity of the enemy must bid fair to make it more *complete*.

Be not therefore dismayed ; but do your utmost, we entreat you, to *defend* the land, and restore it's *tranquility* : And, in a word, to make the people *wise*, *virtuous* and *happy* : And, assuredly, all generations will then rise up and *call you blessed*.

And as to the affairs of this day, suffer me to entreat every one concerned, to consider the *great* importance of a *wise* and *good choice* at this crisis of our affairs ; and therefore do nothing by partiality, but in the *fear of God*, and with a single eye to his glory and the best service of this *bleeding*

bleeding land ! But, what am I saying ? When we are all embarked in one common cause, and that the most important that ever any people were engaged in, and all lies at stake, sure we may spare our words and leave this matter with all safety in your hand—you cannot be wanting. Forgive me that I have spoken. Wishing you therefore, and the *Honorable Council* to be elected, the divine presence, direction and  *blessing* this day and evermore, with all due respect, I take my leave of you. But may we meet at last in a better world, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest !

2. Let me *address* myself, in a few words, to this *Capital*.

Your past *distressed situation*, your almost *miraculous preservation and deliverance*, extorts this from me, out of the usual mode.

Search, I pray you, and see wherefore it was that the Lord hath dealt thus with you.

I know indeed, that your forwardness in the public cause was what provoked the enemy : But see, I beseech you what it was that provoked God to suffer it. And *amend* what is amiss.

And



And be very thankful to God for so wonderful a deliverance, and render unto him according to the mighty benefits received.

Upon the whole, adopt I pray you the language of *Ezra*, (*Ezra ix. 13, 14*) *And after all that is come upon us—seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this, should we again break thy commandments,—wouldest thou not be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping.*

Our earnest wish and prayer is, that this capital may ever lead in all virtue, and be preserved and blessed, and made in all respects the glory of this land.

Finally. Let me in a few words address this whole people.

O my brethren, God's judgments are now abroad in all the land, and he justly expects that we learn righteousness: How melancholly is it that we see no more of it! Many are sighing and crying for the abominations which are yet found in the midst of us; and particularly for the private oppressions of it.

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Nothing is, nothing can be, more un-  
seemly than to oppress one another, while  
we are all groaning under public oppres-  
sions of the enemy, and crying to God and  
man for help! Banish it, banish it, from  
the land, I pray you. On my knees  
would I gladly beg this of you, could I  
hope thereby to prevail.

And let there be no strife, I pray you,  
between town and country, for we are all  
brethren, members of one body. And  
neither can say—I have no need of you.

Blessed be God, there is a sufficiency in  
the land, of the necessities of life; and  
if somebody is not wanting, all the poor  
may be supplied. And as to many, if not  
most, foreign articles of great importance,  
there is undoubtedly a considerable sup-  
ply. How then comes it to pass, that  
such mutual jealousies should arise, as to  
make an artificial scarcity where we all  
know there is none? For Gods sake, don't  
let us counterfeit a scarcity lest he bring a  
real one! But, let town and country open  
their Stores and their hands, and, to the  
utmost of their power, supply each other;  
for the continuance of this strife will be  
very dishonourable to both, and be very  
hurtful, if not ruinous, to the common  
cause!



A little *condescension* and *good-nature*, on both sides, would easily set all to rights. And they who go foremost in rectifying this matter, will be the most *honorable*, let who would begin it.

And, as all depends upon the *divine presence* and  *blessing*, let us do our utmost to engage them by earnest *prayer* and *supplication*; yea and by turning every one from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands (as the king of Nineveh well expressed it) who knows but the Lord will think upon us for good, that we perish not? Yea more, I doubt not, that upon this the Lord will be with us and maintain our *righteous cause*, against an *ungodly nation*.

We have seen abundance of the *goodness of God* already, amidst all our calamities. And our enemies have been many a time *disappointed*, and *fretted*, and gnashed their teeth. Give God the glory of all his *salvations*.

And let the counsel of the Lord be acceptable to the land: And let them wholly *break off their sins* by *righteousness*, and their *iniquities* by *shewing mercy* to the  
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poor; and I have no doubt it will be the restoring and lengthning out of our tranquillity; yea, and that our land, will, ere long, become an *asylum*, or *place of refuge*, to all the persecuted sons of Liberty, in every part of the globe, and be filled with wise and happy men, and become the joy, if not envy, of all the earth.

And, that it may be so, in God's time, Let me entreat you devoutly to join with me in a *prayer for our land*, taken from a *divine model*, in the 83d psalm: The spirit of which, and every principal thought, I have carefully transferred to ourselves, only varying the names and a few other things peculiar to them: A prayer which points out so many particulars in our case this day; that it might almost seem to have been prophetically composed for us.

O thou supreme Jehovah, who rulest in Heaven and earth, and canst at all times do thy pleasure, even with a words speaking.

Appear now for us, we earnestly beseech thee, in this day of our distress, when invaded by a cruel and blood-thirsty enemy; who are come with a design to reduce us to slavery or desolation.

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They are *thine enemies* in this thing as well as ours, being come in a most *unrighteous cause*, without any provocation to justify this outrage.

And yet they make a *noise* and a *tumult* like the *waves* of the *sea* on which they come; and proudly boast that they are come with strength enough to crush us: And they even *mock* our dependance on thee to save us!

*Keep not thou silence, hold not thy peace, sit not still*, O God, and see us perish; but arise for our help; and let thy all-powerful word defend us; that the proud may know that they are but *men*, and that God is with us, against whom they have no power.

We know they have had long *consultations* against us, and laid their plan with all the *depth* of *subtilty* and *crafty wisdom*, against this thy people, whom thou hast so long and so wonderfully defended, as an *hidden treasure*, or as the apple of thine eye.

They have said—If they will not be our *servants* and *bond men*, and suffer us to do *what we please* with them,——Come, let

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us gather a mighty force from all nations, far and near, who will lend us aid, and let us burn their *towns* and *cities*, and make their land a *desolation* !

And, behold, they are even now *leagued* together, even *many nations*, besides our *furious brethren* the *Britons*, who are *principals* in this war ; and have begun the most desperate attacks upon us in various parts of the land. And, unless God mercifully interpose and prevent it, nothing but *blood* and *slaughter* are to be expected !

And, notwithstanding all our warlike preparations, we dare not depend on an arm of flesh to save us ! O that the battle might be the Lords and not ours !

To this end therefore we pray——

*Awake*, O Lord, for our help, and come and save us ! *Awake*, O Lord, as in ancient times ! Do unto them, O Lord, if it be thy will, as thou didst unto the *Midianites* and their *confederates*, and to *Sisera* and to *Jabin*, when they unjustly and without provocation, invaded thy people : And make their *lords* and *nobles* and *great commanders*, like *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, and like *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*.  
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Tho' these angry brethren profess to worship the same God with us, yet, because it is in some-what of a different mode, they seem to have said—*Come let us take the houses of God in possession,* accordingly they have vented a peculiar *spite* against the *houses of God*; *defaced* and *defiled* thy *holy* and beautiful sanctuaries, where our fathers worshipped thee, turning them into houses of *merchandise* and *receptacles for beasts*; and some of them, they have *torn in pieces* and *burned* with fire !!

What holy indignation ought to arise in our breasts on this occasion! And will not God also be angry at such *barbarous profanity* and *impiety*? Surely thou wilt not hold them guiltless, who thus mock thee, and bid defiance to heaven as well as to us!

Therefore we humbly pray—That thou wilt hedge up their way and not suffer them to *proceed* and *prosper*. But, put them to flight *speedily*, if it be thine holy will, and make them run as fast as a *wheel* downwards, or as *stubble* or *chaff* is driven before a furious *whirlwind*: And, as the *fire* consumes the *wood*, and sometimes  
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lays waste whole *forests* on the *mountains*, so let them be laid *waste* and *consumed*, if they obstinately persist in their bloody designs against us.

Lord, raise a *dreadful tempest* to affright them, and let thy tremendous storms make them quake with fear ; and pursue them with thine arrows, till they are either destroyed, or brought to see that God is with us of a truth and fighteth for us, and so return to their own lands, covered with *shame* and *confusion* ; and *humble* themselves before thee, and seek to appease thine anger, by a bitter repentance for their murderous designs ! And let them have neither *credit* nor *courage*, to come out any more against us.

That so all the nations seeing thy mighty power and thy marvellous works, may no more call themselves *supreme* ; but know and acknowledge, that thou art God alone, the only *Supreme Governor* among men, doing whatever pleaseth thee.

And so let thy glorious name be magnified in all the earth till time shall be no more ! And, let all the people say, AMEN and AMEN !





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